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ABSTRACT

In June 1990, after 9 years of court battles, the state supreme court had found that New Jersey's school finance system was inequitable and had to be changed to better support children in urban schools. This book details the reasons behind the reform and its effects and tracks the impact of the reform from its dollar effects on fiscal equity in the classroom to its instructional effects on educational excellence. The book demonstrates how difficult it is to redistribute finances when political power has shifted to the more affluent suburbs and has declined in the poorer urban districts. The text focuses on personnel changes, including salary increases; adjustments in curriculum, instruction, and assessment; the changes in services for at-risk students and some of the programmatic responses to these students; and the many problems behind deferred maintenance and how districts address these needs. The conclusion presents three stories of school finance reform and the implications of such reform. (Contains an index and approximately 160 references.) (RJM)

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